

**CITY COUNCIL**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 202  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065  
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5010 • FAX: (808) 768-5011

**BRANDON ELEFANTE**

Councilmember District 8

Aiea, Pearl City, Waipahū

Chair, Committee on Public Health, Safety and Welfare

Telephone: (808) 768-5008

Email: [belefante@honolulu.gov](mailto:belefante@honolulu.gov)

April 20, 2018

**Memorandum**

To: Ms. Heather Murakami

Fr: Councilmember Brandon Elefante 

Re: Travel Report for the 2018 Annual National Association of Counties ("NACo") Legislative Conference

Attached you will find my travel report for the Annual NACo Legislative Conference from March 3, 2018 to March 6, 2018.

Thank you.

**2018 Annual National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference  
March 3 to 7, 2018  
Washington Hilton 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009  
Report By: Brandon Elefante, Honolulu City Councilmember District 8**

**BACKGROUND**

The National Association of Counties ("NACo") is a national organization that represents 3,069 counties across the United States. The City and County of Honolulu is a member of NACo. NACo was founded in 1935. Its primary mission is to promote sound public policies by pursuing excellence in public service to "produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties." In addition, conference attendees have the opportunity to hear from key speakers about how federal policies affect counties.

This year's conference was held in Washington, D.C. Majority of the conference sessions were held at the Washington Hilton Hotel 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009, and some sessions were held at the U.S. Capitol. The conference began on March 3, 2019 and ended on March 7, 2018.

The conference attracts county elected officials from across the U.S.

**Saturday, March 3, 2018**

***Arrival Day in Washington, D.C.***

I arrived in Washington, D.C. in the afternoon of Saturday, March 3, 2018 and attended the Transportation Policy Steering Committee-Business meeting.

***1:30PM to 4PM***

***Registration/Transportation Policy Steering Committee-Business Meeting***

The Transportation Policy Steering Committee is chaired by the Honorable Gary Moore. The Committee on Transportation discussed and voted on three resolutions which were all approved by unanimous consent.

- Urging Federal Policy Makers to Include Support for Transit Options in Any Upcoming Infrastructure Package and/or List of Expanded Legislative Principles
  - The NACo urges the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of Transportation ("DOT") to provide funding mechanisms in its upcoming infrastructure package, including incentives for private investment such as public-private partnerships, to state and local governments for purposes of expanding, installing and maintaining transit systems; including but not limited to Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT"), Heavy Rail and Light Rail systems
- Urging Congress to Amend the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) and Hours of Service Final Rule to Provide an Agricultural Exemption
  - Federal regulation mandating the use of an electronic logging device for all agricultural transportation drivers does not take into account delays drivers will encounter in the process of loading, unloading and transporting livestock, which could result in inhumane animal treatment, devalued livestock pricing and further economic hardship to rural counties across the United States
- To Support Increased Consideration of Alternative Congestion Mitigation Measures
  - Federal funding for automated technologies has been focused mostly on the development of driverless cars and shuttles which can enhance mobility and improve first/last mile accessibility, but have limited ability to reduce road congestion, and may increase vehicle miles traveled before mitigation measures can be implemented

**Sunday, March 4, 2018**

**10AM to 12PM**

***Large Urban County Caucus Meeting***

NACo President Roy Charles Brooks opened the session with opening remarks. Chair Larry Johnson of the Large Urban County Caucus opened with remarks as well.

*Deputy Mayor of Washington, D.C. (former lobbyist who grew up in D.C.)*

- Gentrify in place
- D.C. has the worst workforce system in the nation
  - 700,000 jobs
    - Reinvented the workforce
- Building economic opportunities
- Financially FIT D.C. (online platform)
  - Educate residents of D.C. on how to get FIT
- First Source
  - 51% of new hires are district residents with government contracts
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund
  - Building affordable housing all over DC
  - Not able to build housing quick
- \$8 billion in DC Operating Budget
- \$20 million for youth summer program
- Connected with Uber to build in the area
- Public schools have to evolve
  - Prepare young people for a four year college in a liberal arts degree
  - Labor has the greatest need too

*Michael Thurmond, DeKalb County Mayor*

- Planning for the coming Recession
  - Storms in census across America
  - Ongoing spiraling in murder rate
  - Unable to sustain economic growth in violence or gang violence
  - Lowest common denominator are to the jobs
  - Tax policies are important
  - Georgia passed legislation to reduce taxes by \$4B for the next four years
  - \$1.2B SPLOSH Referendum Tax
    - \$600M property tax relief
  - Provide jobs for young people in the county

*Katherine Berger, Los Angeles County Supervisor*

- Elected in 2016
  - Was Chief of Staff for her predecessor for 28 years
- Measure H (Sales Tax) → 10 years.
- Measure M (Tax) → \$120B over 40 years
- Hollywood Hills → Air BnB renting for parties (a growing concern)
- \$530,000 median average price of a home

- \$2M for each county supervisor they represent
- 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles
- No train connecting to the Los Angeles Airport (LAX)
  - By 2028 will have a train going to the airport
- Workforce is key
- People want to get Amazon.com
- Need affordable housing for workforce housing
- Big companies are looking at what's affordable and how transit can connect
- Reinvesting in labor and retraining
- Not everyone goes to a four year college

**Monday, March 5, 2018**

**9AM to 10:30AM**

**General Session**

***Hon. David J. Shulkin, U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs***

***Hon. Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Secretary of Transportation***

The Honorable Roy Charles Brooks, President of NACo, began the session with opening remarks.

- Counties' governments matter to America
- NACo is our voice in Washington, D.C.
- 77% of Counties are members of NACo
  - Kentucky now has 100% membership in NACo
- NACo has 10 policy committees
- Key issues: poverty, opioids, foreign lands, infrastructure, etc.
- 35 years partnership with Nationwide
  - 400,000 county employees for retirement

Secretary Shulkin



*Secretary Shulkin sharing his presentation.*

- A practicing medical doctor internalist
- 2017 Accomplishments
  - Family, Caregiver Advisory Committee
  - Veteran C.A.R.E. Plan
  - Community Care
  - Mental Health Executive Order (100% will be entitled to it)
  - Improving the Disability Benefits Questionnaire
  - Appeals Modernization (First time since 1930s)
  - Over \$766 million awarded in grants to state and counties
  - Veterans are getting older (medical and benefit needs are getting older)
- Five Priorities
  - Greater Choice (Customer Focus)
  - Modernizing Our Systems
  - Improving Timeliness of Service (Same-Day Service)
    - 96% of appointments within 30 days
  - Focus Resources More Efficiently
  - Suicide Prevention
    - 20 veterans a day take their lives to suicide
      - American Public Health Crisis
      - #BeThere Campaign
        - Tom Hanks is a national spokesperson
        - Increased rate of suicide is within first 12 months since leaving service

- Opioid rates
  - 41% decrease in opioid prescriptions in last four years
- 45,000 homeless veterans
- Extend mental health benefits to other than honorable service members' discharge
- President Trump's 2019 Budget is \$198.6 billion

#### NACo First Vice President Greg Cox

- Infrastructure Request
- #CountiesBuild
- 78% of all public transit agencies are county supported

#### Secretary Chao

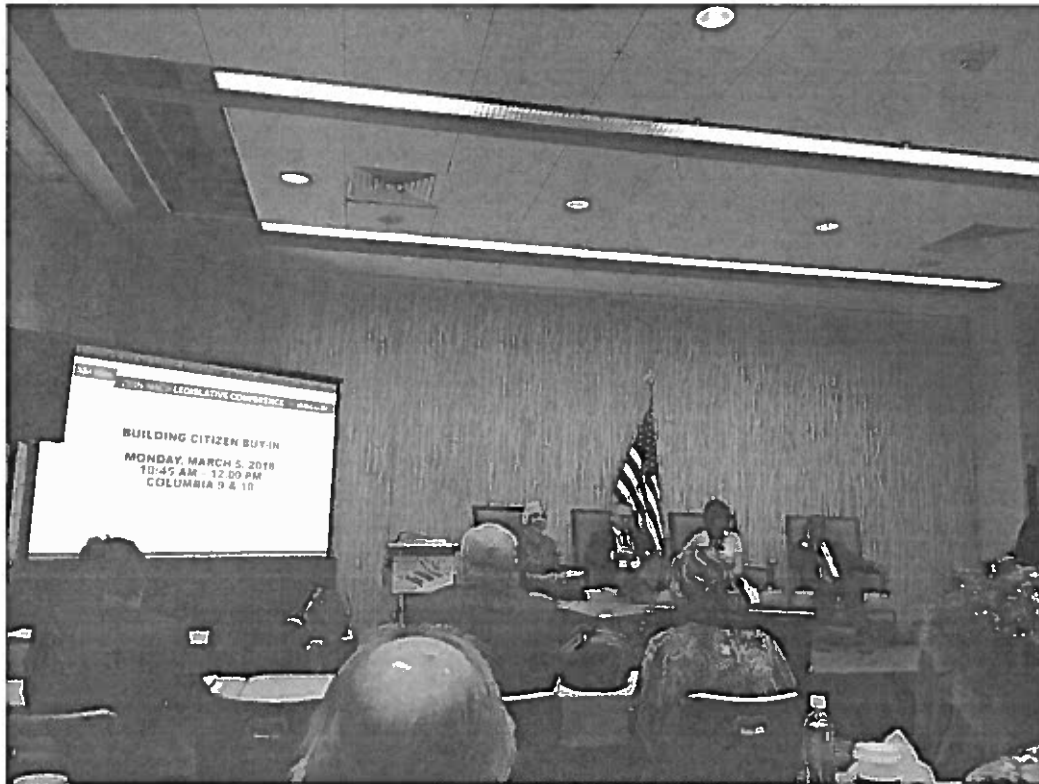
- Wife of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
- She opened with a special shout out to delegates from Kentucky
- Former Secretary of Labor under the Bush Administration (2001 to 2009).
- \$1.4 trillion in infrastructure investments
  - Federal dollars as seed money
  - Provide needs of rural communities
  - Streamline → shorter process for permitting
  - Reduce regulation
- 26 states don't allow the private sector to build
  - Private sector helps to allocate risk
- 2017
  - \$300 million in reduced regulatory costs
  - By 2018: Decrease of \$500 million in regulatory costs
- One million registered drones in 2018
- By 2020 one billion travelers and passengers in national air space
- Focus on drones and autonomous vehicles
  - Improve access (new technologies)
  - Freedom and mobility to seniors
  - 74% of America are hesitant on driverless vehicles
    - Safety and Security policies

This session also incorporated candidates for NACo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President position. The following candidates spoke: Hon. Ray Jeffers, Hon. Larry "LJ" Johnson, Hon. Gary Moore, and the Hon. Barbara Schriff.

**10:45AM to 12 Noon**

***Building Citizen Buy-In***

***County government management and operations rely on citizen engagement for many reasons, including votes on bond proposals and tax increases, input on budget proposals and key advisory boards. This workshop will focus on more ways counties can harness and increase citizen engagement in overall operations and management, validating decision-making and working effectively as a community. This workshop covers using social media to rapidly mobilize a community, successful messaging and other public outreach tools.***



*Building Citizen Buy-In panelists*

Moderator: Dena R. Diorio, County Manager of Mecklenburg County, N.C.

The panel consisted of elected officials.

The Honorable Pat Farr, Commissioner Lane County, OR

- 350,000 people in the county (Eugene, OR)
- From the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade Region
- County lost faith in government
  - Breaking promises and lack of transparency
  - Significant cut in funding
  - All time low
- Asked for a huge revenue levy



- Passed with 60% “Yes” vote
  - Increase in 225 jail beds
  - Counseling for youth treatment
  - Strong public outreach
  - Research (Sheriffs were popular and not commissioners)
  - Reduced the amount of the levy
    - 72% “Yes” vote second time for levy
- Challenge is to house homeless people (veterans)
  - Housed 405 veterans
  - 600 wet bed apartments to address those with substance issues

The Honorable Catherine E. Pugh, Mayor, Baltimore City, MD

- You're the servant for all
- Inclusive and diverse
- Community listening groups
- Every Wednesday
- Open Press Conference
  - Unscripted
  - Call to Action
    - No bridges
    - Various group held monthly meetings with the mayor at City Hall
- In office for 14 months as mayor
- State Senator for 10 years and served as majority leader
- A business owner, MBA graduate, and owned a newspaper company
- Focus on unemployment rate
  - Was losing 20-25 police officers per month
  - Focus on transforming the police department
- Vision: More inclusive and diverse
- Recreation centers have to be open later until 11pm
- Reconfigure government – different shifts
- Neighborhood Engagement Office
- Homeless Office to work during the hours to best serve its clients
- Decrease in 30% in violence with more frequent meetings
- Blocking of streets to listen to people
- Not 9AM to 5PM; 24 hour operation
- Interdepartmental communication with government
- Integrated service delivery as important
- Have men and women in communities in uniform in communities that they serve
- Example: 65 homeless people with tents camped at City Hall
  - Spent 70 days at City Hall
  - Connected mothers with children for Section 8 Vouchers
  - Others connected with housing
- Office for African American Males
- Response time used to be 14 to 17 days by Police; now its 1.5 days
- Women's Commission created
- Find out what people want

- Take homelessness very seriously

The Honorable Michael L. Thurmond, CEO of DeKalb County, Ga. (Atlanta, Ga.)

- Includes Atlanta; 13 cities located in the county
- Large group of refugees and migrant population
- Center for Disease Control is located in the county
- A lot of movie production
- No county manager; CEO is the county manager
- A former state representative and school superintendent
- Racial divide versus north and south
- Predominantly democrat county
- Georgia is more of a Republican state
- In order to serve you must build alliances
  - Learn to listen to constituents and critics is crucial
  - Earn trust
  - Move beyond corruption
  - Be honest
  - Obligated to over communicate
  - One press release will not get it done
  - Responsibility on us
  - Example: 26% of students indicate that English is their second language
    - Not getting parental support at home
    - Interpreters were previously fired before (under previous leadership)
    - Hired interpreters and translated language
- Learn how to say, "I am sorry" and be genuine
- We make mistakes
- The public will give a second chance
- Respect people—everyone
- Tax payers are the shareholders
- I am still responsible

The Honorable Dena Diorio, County Administrator, Mecklenburg County, N.C.

- Met with news media directors
- Next Door app
- Documented work plans → very detailed
- Go to the Faith community
- Be creative with where you want to go and engage them
- Property assessor
  - 100 community meetings
    - Property reevaluation 41 out of 100

**12 Noon to 1:30PM**

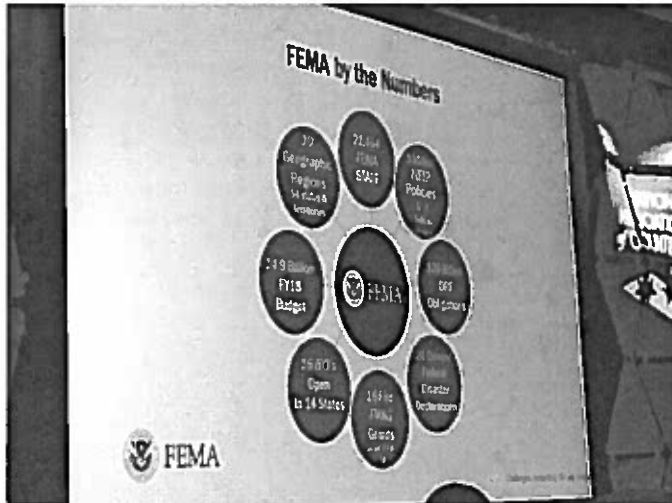
**Attendee Luncheon**

**Tuesday, March 6, 2018**

**9:30AM to 11:45AM**

**General Session**

Opening remarks were made by NACo President the Honorable Roy Charles Brooks. Important to be defined by our responses and keep our residents safe.



*FEMA by the Numbers slide*

The Honorable William "Brock" Long, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- Been in FEMA for 17 years
- Went to Appalachian State University
  - Was supposed to be budget analyst
- Hurricane Floyd (Category Four Hurricane)
  - Just moved to Savannah, Georgia
- Most likely your neighbor will assist you in times of a disaster
- FEMA integration teams → Embedded in state agencies
- FEMA is a complex agency
  - 21,000 employees
  - \$1.3 trillion of flood exposure
  - Every three days a new "event" (i.e., storm/disaster occurs)
- Are we building redundant and resiliency communications
- One of the largest insurers in the country
- Disaster recovery is complex
  - Review policies before the storm
- In 2017: Hurricanes: Harvey, Irma, Maria, and California wildfires → 25 million people affected
- Strategic Plan
  - Needs a uniform approach

- Goal 1 → Build a Culture of Preparedness (Citizens are the first responders)
- Goal 2 → Ready the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters
- Goal 3 → Reduce the complexity of FEMA
- One out of four people will use CPR
- Create a culture of preparedness

The next session focused on a dialogue between the Honorable Cory Booker, U.S. Senator and the Honorable Tim Scott, U.S. Senator. The moderator was Mr. John Lettieri.

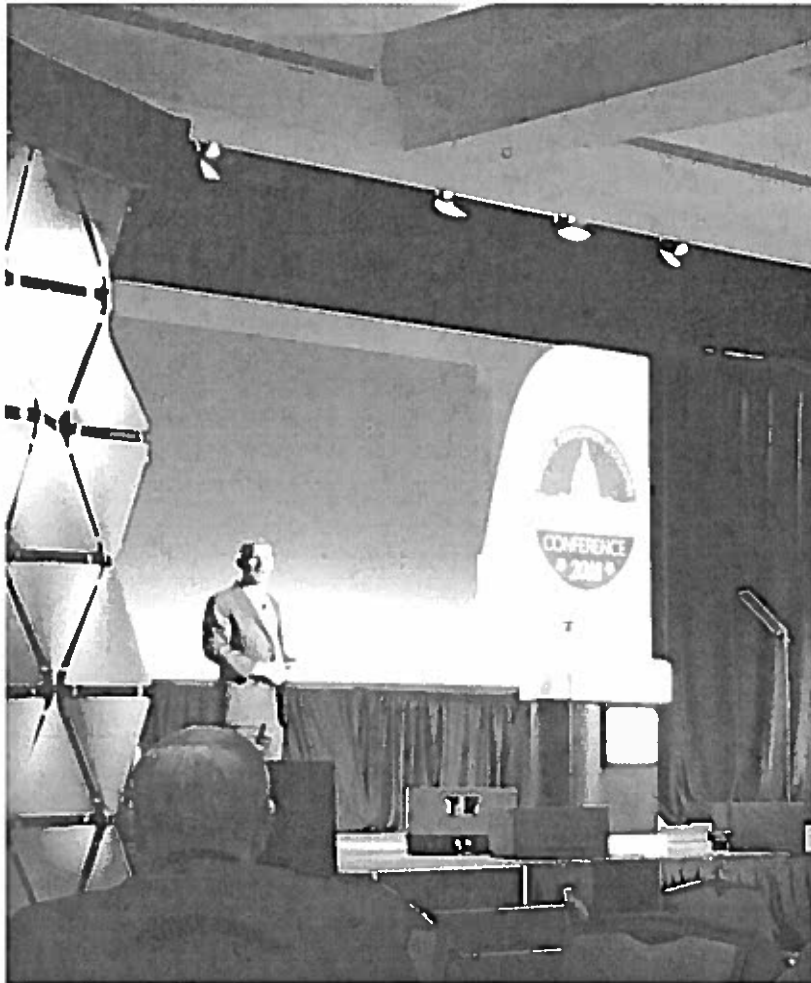


*From left to right: Sen. Booker and Sen. Scott*

- Discussed legislation and working together
- The U.S. Senate is about relationships
  - Senator Scott has a book coming out about rebuilding trust
    - Mom was a single parent
    - Find out about our common interests
    - Focus on workforce development
    - Served 13 years on the County Council and former County Council Chairman
- Opportunity zones
  - Way to attract real capital in distressed areas
  - Resources to high potential areas
  - Gentrification destroys communities
- Senator Booker
  - Create tax incentives
  - 2/3 of Americans don't have college educations

- In Germany, 50% of kids don't have a college education
- Newark, NJ population has grown for the first time in 60 years
- Millennial (toss up) 50% are making more money than their parents
- Stagnant wages → most don't make a living wage
- Innovations are shifting to outsourcing to other countries
  - Change stock market
  - Rules of economy
    - Get back to building the middle class
    - Economy has changed
      - Go back to labor and jobs

The last speaker in this session was Retired General Stan McChrystal (Four Star General)



*Ret. General McChrystal*

- A professor at Yale University
- Went to West Point
- Been married for almost 41 years
- Our journey in life takes us to different places
- Blockbuster Company, founded in 1985

- Every Friday night his family went to Blockbuster
  - Viacom bought it for \$4.8 million
  - \$800 million made in late fees
  - 9,000 locations in 2004
  - Competition: E-commerce
  - Discontinued late fees
  - Netflix entered the market
  - Now, Blockbuster is gone
- Iran in 1980
  - Created a joint special operations command
    - Dream team combat team
    - Evil Claw → Failed Mission
- Iraq in 2003
  - Commanding General six months after invasions
    - Assumptions for invasion proved to be wrong
    - Dealing with organized terrorist organization
  - Takes over JSOC
    - 25 to 45 year old professionals
    - Everyone is a combat force
    - Designed to combat terrorist networks
    - Minimize risk when we have control—didn't work, had to adjust
    - Trust: Create experiences to build confidence and relationships
  - Shared consciousness
    - In 2004 → Up to 18 raids per month (almost one every other night)
      - Terrorist groups was still growing
    - In August 2006 → 300 raids per month (increase efficiencies)
    - Connected 17 task forces throughout Iraq
    - 50 people a day for 30 mins. to 7,500 people to 90 mins
      - Synchronized
      - Don't have to make decisions → Share consciousness
        - Empower execution
    - Complexity → Gift of information technology
- Empowered Execution
  - Centralized doesn't work anymore
  - Shared consciousness x Accountability x Risk
    - Eyes on; hands off leadership
  - General McChrystal would sleep after dawn and he would get interrupted after several hours of sleeping. People in his unit would ask for his approval of a raid or strike
    - 70% of the time we don't execute
    - Key officials took ownership and responsibilities
    - Write a policy to prevent risk
    - People can make mistakes and they did
    - What about the leader?
      - Come from a family of soldiers
      - Grew up in the military mindset
      - What we do as leaders might be different than what our parents or other leaders have done

- Grow leaders; enable leaders
  - Leaders → gardeners
  - Most effective leaders are a lot like gardeners
  - 1961 President John F. Kennedy "We choose to go to the moon not because it's easy but because it's hard."
    - It's up to you!

### ***12 noon to 6PM***

The afternoon portion of the day consisted of meetings with our Hawai'i Federal Delegation in the U.S. Congress from Hon. Schatz, Hon. Hirono, and Hon. Hanabusa. The delegates from the four counties of the State of Hawai'i took this opportunity to express our interests and concerns from the counties. For Honolulu, we shared about working together with the Federal Transit Administration regarding the Honolulu Rail Transit Project and in addition, the concerns of the Red Hill Fuel Underground Storage tanks and monitoring that issue.

### **Closing Remarks**

Overall, it was a great NACo Conference. There were many interesting session and great keynote speakers ranging from rebuilding trust and confidence with communities to issues facing our communities and the impact on federal policies on a local level. I really enjoyed attending this year's NACo Conference and also meeting with our Hawai'i Federal delegation in Congress.

City Council  
City and County of Honolulu

## CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: April 26, 2018

Traveler: Councilmember Brandon Elefante  
Event: 2018 National Assn of Counties Legislative Conference  
Location: Washington, DC  
Dates: From March 2, 2018 To March 7, 2018

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee	0	
2. Airfare	0	
3. Hotel	0	
4. Meals		
5. Ground Transportation		
6. Tips		
7. Other		
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	0	

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:

  
Signature of Traveler

04/26/2018  
Date